DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 207 056 CS 206 493

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TITLE Rural Journalism in Africa. Reports and Papers on Mass Communication No. 88.
INSTITUTION United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO ISBN-92-3-101-752-7
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 38p.
AVAILABLE FROM UNIPUB, 345 Park Ave., New York, NY 10010.

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *African Culture; Developing Nations; Journalism; *Media Research; *Newspapers; *Rural Areas
IDENTIFIERS *Africa; *Media Role; Unesco

ABSTRACT

This report details a series of Unesco sponsored surveys, on the developing newspapers in rural Africa, that explored (1) the conditions conducive to the establishment and continuity of rural newspapers; (2) sources for training rural journalists; (3) the use of research; and (4) ways and means of using to advantage the varied resources already available. The first section of the report gives an overview of the rural African newspaper. The second section discusses the resources for training in rural journalism, while the third section covers the origins, development, and present situation of rural newspapers in Africa, country by country. The fourth section discusses the conclusions of the surveys and the future of rural newspapers. Appended is a section on rural newspapers and African languages. (HTH)

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No. 88

Rural journalism in Africa

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Rural journalism in Africa

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unesco

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ISBN 92-3-101 752-7

French edition 92-3-201 752-0
Spanish edition 92-3-301 752-4

Published in 1981 by the
United Nations Educational,
Scientific and Cultural Organization
7, place de Fontenoy, 75700 Paris, France

Composed and printed in the workshops
of Unesco

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Preface

Efforts to start rural newspapers in Africa began in the early 1960s in Liberia.[1] These were usually one-page mimeographed news-sheets with a circulation of about 2,000. Almost all of them were linked to literacy projects.

As a method of "mass production", the mimeograph technique offered a simple, low-cost entry for rural journalism. It did, however, have its disadvantages: limited reproduction and inability to reproduce illustrations and photos. The newer electronic copying machines could overcome the problems of limited reproduction, but at a higher cost and with more complicated problems of maintenance.

In order to solve these problems while at the same time keeping production costs within modest means, another strategy was used in the 1970s. Reporters and editors were trained in the villages ready to undertake a rural press project; simple editing and layout facilities were provided. Contracts were made with either a government or a commercial printer for the photographic plate-making and printing; the printed copies were then circulated in the project villages. The new method permitted reproduction of photographs and illustrations, higher quality printing, and runs of up to 25,000, sometimes using four-colour separation.

Evaluations of the progress of the rural press in Africa towards the beginning of 1977 showed two important points:

First, despite the success of the later generation of newspapers, and their role in literacy retention and the dissemination of development information, the total number and circulation of these papers have remained, at best, modest;

Second, side by side with the advent of the rural newspapers, more than a score of journalism training and research institutions have been established since 1965, but few of the rural journalists had formal training at any of these institutions nor did any of the newspapers benefit from their researches; and none of these institutions has a journalism course oriented directly to rural journalism.

Against this background, Unesco began a series of surveys on rural newspapers in Africa, seeking to explore: (1) the conditions conducive to the establishment and continuity of rural newspapers; (2) sources for training rural journalists; (3) the use of research; (4) ways and means of using to advantage the varied resources already available.

Intensive studies were undertaken: Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Tanzania, Upper Volta and Zambia. Other countries were covered through existing data, reports of consultants, and previous surveys.

The survey team comprised: Dr. Paul Ansah, Director of the School of Journalism and Communication Studies, University of Ghana, Legon; Mr. Cherif Fall of the Centre des Etudes Scientifiques et Technologiques de l'Information, Université de Dakar; Mr. Bernard Chindji Kouleu of the Ecole Supérieure de l'Information et du Journalisme de Yaoundé; and Mr. Peter Mwaura, Director of the School of Journalism, University of Nairobi. Miss Samina Hamid, formerly of the Asian Mass Communication Research Information Centre, Singapore, assisted in editing and preparing this report.

Beyond the descriptive data on rural newspapers, most of which are being published for the first time, it is hoped that this report will not only encourage original and innovative research on rural journalism, but also lead to a more fruitful and continuing relationship between training institutions and the village newspaper.

The authors are responsible for the choice and the presentation of the facts contained in this report and for the opinions expressed therein, which are not necessarily those of Unesco and do not commit the Organization.

(1) The full report appeared in Rural Mimeo Newspapers, Reports and Papers on Mass Communication, No. 46. Paris, Unesco, 1965. (o.p.)

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CHAPTER I

An overview of the African rural newspaper

The rural newspaper in Africa is unlike newspapers intended for rural readers in other regions of the world. It is neither a metropolitan-based newspaper with a wide circulation, nor a provincial city-based newspaper with a regional outlook. The African rural newspaper is usually found in a rural community. Its content and style are oriented to the specific information and learning needs of that community. Its sophistication is determined by the prevailing literacy levels; in fact, most newspapers were launched as tools for literacy retention.

The growth of these rural newspapers has been slow, but the very phenomenon of rural newspapers must be seen in the context of low literacy levels, wide variety of languages and the unavailability of basic infrastructures (roads, electricity, and services) in the areas beyond the capital. And yet, there have been a number of rural newspapers, many of them successful in their own right.

The origins of rural newspapers

Rural newspapers in Africa are recent and innovative. A few years ago, the expression "rural press" was simply a neologism. The earliest newspapers began in Liberia in 1963 and in Niger in 1964 in the form of mimeographed bulletins in support of literacy. Today, many rural newspapers have become active sources for self-education and information.

In 1971, a survey of eleven African countries indicated the practicability of a rural press where printing facilities and basic journalism skills were available and where there was an ongoing literacy or rural development programme. Such countries included: Mali, Togo, Congo, Benin, Gabon, Upper Volta and Senegal. Basic needs were outlined: the identification of rural journalists/communicators; the choice of a language spoken, understood and extensively used by the majority of the proposed audience; the availability of a printing press; raw materials; an infrastructure conducive to the regular publication and distribution of the newspapers and the existence of a rural development agency or office.

Mali was the first country to set up a rural newspaper in accordance with the guidelines suggested by the communication and development specialists. Consequently, Kibaru was launched in the Bambara language in March 1972, under the direction of the Mali National Agency of Information (ANIM) and of the daily newspaper, l'Essor. Its initial circulation increased rapidly from 5,000 to 10,000 copies, indicating an early success.

Mali's venture in rural journalism encouraged other African countries to follow suit. Six months later, in September 1972, Game Su was published in Togo under the joint sponsorship of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Information, with the assistance of Unesco. The latter half of 1972 was to see the birth of yet another rural newspaper, Sengo, published in Congo under the patronage of the Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Mission d'Aide et de Coopération française (MAC).

Table I lists the newspapers that have been established since 1971. It should be noted that in Liberia there were originally about a score of rural newspapers of which only eight remain today. These are published sporadically and have irregular circulation. Those newspapers with less than 1,000 copies are usually mimeographed newssheets, but are included here to make the survey complete, even though they are not, properly speaking, "newspapers".

All the papers listed in Table I are monthlies except those in Burundi and Rwanda, which are weeklies.

Most of the early newspapers were linked to a literacy programme. This not only determined the content, style and reading level of the newspapers, but also greatly influenced the choice of language - in all cases, that used in teaching literacy. In those cases where a single language was universally spoken by the villagers (such as Swahili, Ewé or Hawsa), and in many cases in several countries, there was little problem. But there are many countries were a different language is spoken in every village along the main

road. In these cases, the choice of language becomes an important policy decision. Should the newspaper choose a highly local language to reach the people more effectively? Or a more widely used language in the hope of reaching more people and eventually creating a more widely used information vehicle?

Annex I contains a synthesis of the language distribution in Africa and describes why and how to choose African languages for rural newspapers.

TABLE I

RURAL NEWSPAPERS IN AFRICA

COUNTRY	NAME OF NEWSPAPER	LANGUAGE	CIRCULATION	LAUNCHING DATE
Benin	Kparo	Bariba	1,000	March 1972
	Eunbuke	Adja	2,500	March 1974
	Imole	Yoruba	2,500	March 1974
	Mi Se Nu	Fon	2,500	March 1974
Burundi	Ubumwe	Kirundi	3,000	March 1978
Cameroon	Bloc Notes du Monde rural	French		
Central African Empire	Linga	Sengo	1,000	September 1976
Congo	Sengo	French	3,000	March 1972
	La Forêt	French		April 1975
Ghana	Kpodoga	Ewé	5,000	February 1976
Ivory Coast	Terre et Progrès	French	60,000	1973
	Agripomo	French	5,000	1973
	La Nouvelle	French	5,000	1978
Kenya	Kisomo	Kikuyu-Swahili	5,000	November 1975
	Bumanyati	Swahili	4,000	June 1976
Liberia[1]	Gbehzohn Dukpa	English		
	Maryland News	English		
	Bong County News			
	Sonniequellie Sun			
	Lofa County Monthly News	English		
	Grand Gedeh News			
	Webbo World	English		
	Ganta News	English		
Mali	Kibaru	Bambara	12,500	March 1972
Niger	Gangaa	Hawsa Djerma	2,500	June 1974
	Saabon Ra'yii	Hawsa	200	
	Kasaa May Albarka	Hawsa	1,000	
	Muryar Damagaram	Hawsa	100	
	Amfaanin Kay	Hawsa	500	
	Alpishirinku	Hawsa Tamasheq	250	
	Is Ian Dagn Tamajeq	Tamasheq	350	
	Tarmaamum Aasar	Hawsa	100	
	Boro Coyo Gati Borcin Tarey	Hawsa/Zarma	1,000	
	Jine Koy Yan	Zarma	175	
	Mangaari Kuu Ye	Kanuri	500	
	Ililii Arzikin Kasaa		100	
	Albarkar Tsirkaw		100	
Rwanda	Hobe	Kinyarwanda	57,000	1955
	Imvaho	Kinyarwanda	5,000/6,000	
	Kinyamateka	Kinyarwanda	9,500	1933

(1) Source: Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs and Tourism: letter 6 June 1974.

(Table I continued)

COUNTRY	NAME OF NEWSPAPER	LANGUAGE	CIRCULATION	LAUNCHING DATE
Tanzania	Elimu Haina Mwisho	Swahili	45,000	1974
Togo	Game Su	Ewé	2,500	September 1972
	Tew Fema	Kabye	2,500	January 1977
Upper Volta	Essor Rural	French	2,000	July 1973
	Fasobaara	Jula	3,000	1973
	Manegre	Moore	1,250	1975
Zambia	Imbila	Bemba	27,000	
	Intanda	Tonga	7,000	
	Lisela-Zambia	Lozi	8,700	
	Lukanga	Bemba/Lenje	6,500	
	Ngoma	Lunda/Luvale	3,000	
	Tsopano	Nyanja	12,000	

Structure of rural newspapers

In almost all African countries, the rural newspapers are publications of the government or of public agencies. This sponsorship has, to a large measure, made for a clear delineation of development objectives for them. While almost all the early newspapers were intended to promote literacy and provide reading material for new literates, many later expanded their objectives to include one or several of the following:

1. To ensure continual education for the rural population.
2. To keep the rural population regularly informed of local, regional and national events.
3. To provide readers with practical information to improve cultural techniques, health, economic and social conditions.
4. To encourage the habit of newspaper reading.
5. To initiate the establishment of a decentralized local press and to help the rural population to learn to express itself in that press.
6. To ensure the participation of the readers in the process of economic and social development.
7. To provide an instrument for dialogue between the administration and the rural population.

As can be seen in Table II, some newspapers focus solely on one or another aspect of development; others are general, multi-purpose newspapers.

Tentative classification according to the sponsoring ministry or agency

The pattern of government sponsorship and support for rural newspapers differs in each of the countries. Since newspapers are vehicles of information, many are sponsored by the Ministry of Information or its equivalent. Since development content, by its very nature concerns a number of different sectors, any of a number of ministries or agencies may have had a hand in the sponsorship, management, or editorial control of a rural newspaper:

Ministry of Education/Literacy;
Ministry of Information;
Ministry of Rural Development;
Department of Agriculture;
Ministry of Health and Social Services;
National Information Services;
Services of Popular Education;
Catholic Missions;
Fédération des églises et missions évangeliques du Cameroun (F. E. M. E. C.).

To understand the organizational structure of these rural newspapers (more comprehensively treated in Chapter III), Table II also indicates the sponsoring ministry or development agency.

Circulation

Most of these rural newspapers are published monthly, though seldom on a regular date. Circulation ranges from 1,000 to 10,000 copies, but a few have a larger number of copies.

Format

Most rural publications use a tabloid format. The style of writing, the contents and the presentation are adapted to the skills of the unpractised reader. Simplicity and readability are stressed. Articles are short and use simple words and uncomplicated sentences. Page size and layout are designed to present only a few items on each page, interspersed with illustrations and photographs. Each item is normally self-contained and printed in large type. Although news content varies, emphasis is placed on local news and problems affecting the community and its inhabitants.

Personnel

Most of the rural newspapers are run by an editor assisted by one or two full-time reporters. Almost all are development officers in one or another agency, but none was ever formally trained to run or edit a newspaper. The staff usually have ethnic and cultural ties with the region, facility in communicating with the masses and an ability to convert development information into local languages. Because of these assets, they play an important role as catalysts for development, as well as being reporters and editors for the newspaper.

Printing facilities

In general, there are three production methods presently in use for printing the rural newspapers: (a) mimeographing facilities; (b) access to offset presses; and (c) offset presses owned by the newspaper.

The first experiments with mimeographed newspapers took place in Liberia and Niger. The mimeo method is technically simple and reasonably rapid, but cannot produce more than 2,000 copies. This, of course, limits a mimeo newspaper to a few villages.

Despite the technical simplicity of mimeo, using a wax stencil has several inconveniences: (1) duplicating paper is expensive; (2) the format size does not lend itself to a great variety of presentation; (3) art illustrations are difficult to cut on the stencils; (4) photographs are impossible to reproduce.

Electronically produced stencils are superior in quality, especially for reproducing art designs and photographs; they also permit a higher number of reproduced copies. But the machinery for this reproductive method is much more complex, expensive and difficult to maintain.

At the present time, there is no rural newspaper of sufficiently frequent and high circulation to justify economically its own printing press. Most papers appear once a month with an average circulation of under 10,000 copies, a quantity which would leave the machines idle for the rest

of the month. Thus a number of newspapers directly manage only the editorial and layout operations, and subcontract printing services at a commercial or government printing facility. This method not only offers complete editorial and artistic control over the preparation of newspapers, but also enables the preparation of special types not otherwise available. There may, of course, be some delays or misunderstandings in interpreting text and layout, but at least this method saves on the cost of manpower in operating a complete printing facility for a once-a-month run.

Only the Tanzanian newspaper Elimu Haina Mwisho owns its own printing press, which was established as a general facility for literacy publications, including the newspaper.

Financial viability

The ability of a rural newspaper to become financially autonomous is especially relevant in a context where literacy levels are low, where no habit of newspaper reading has yet evolved, where the buying power of the people is limited and transactions are often not based on a money economy.

All of the newspapers in this survey are in one way or another directly supported by a government agency for the hiring of personnel, for printing facilities, for advertisements, for subsidized copies. The experience so far has been that subsidized newspapers last only as long as the subsidy; hence, the early demise of several of the mimeo newspapers and early offset papers.

In order to bring the cost of the paper down to a reasonable level, it must have a large circulation. But large circulation is impeded by numerous languages in use, distribution over difficult terrain and the very concept itself of a rural newspaper which is to reach a specific local readership, often not very large.

Advertising is a possible source of revenue, but in many villages there is neither the need nor the funds for advertising.

Summary

The rural newspaper in Africa is a development-oriented monthly of modest circulation aimed at a specific local readership in rural communities. Early newspapers began with the objective of literacy retention and gradually widened their development objectives over the years. Most newspapers do not own their own printing facilities but are offered access to offset presses by agreement or subcontract. At present, not one newspaper is economically autonomous.

TABLE II

DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES

COUNTRY	NEWSPAPER	MINISTRY/AGENCY	OBJECTIVES
Central African Empire	Linga	Ministry of Education/Literacy	Retaining and continuing literacy
Liberia	Gbehzohn	Government Regional	Retaining and continuing literacy
	Dukpa	Information Centre	
	Maryland News	Ministry of Information	Development in all spheres - economic, social and cultural
	Bong County News		
	Sanniequellie Sun		
	Lofa County Monthly News		
	Grand Gedeh News		
	Webbo World		
	Ganta News		
Mali	Kibaru	Mali Information Services	Retaining and continuing literacy
Niger	Gangaa	Ministry of Education/Literacy	Retaining and continuing literacy
	Presses rurales (12 publications)		
Rwanda	Imvaho	Ministry of Information	Diffusion of general information and popularization of government policies
	Hobe	Catholic Missions	Retaining literacy
	Kinyamateka		
Tanzania	Elimu Haina Mwisho	Ministry of Education Norad/Unesco	Retaining and continuing literacy
Togo	Game Su	Ministry of Health and Social Services	Retaining and continuing literacy
	Tew Fema		Development in all spheres - economic, social and cultural
Upper Volta	Essor Rural	Ministry of Rural Development	Oriented mainly towards rural development
	Fasobaara	Commission nationale des langues voltafques	Retaining and continuing literacy
	Manegre		
Zambia	Imbila	Ministry of Information	Diffusion of general information and popularization of government policies
	Intanda		
	Lisela-Zambia		
	Lukanga		
	Ngoma		
	Tsopano		

CHAPTER II

Resources for training in rural journalism

For the most part, rural newspapers in Africa were launched without the benefits offered by most research and journalism training centres, although at least twenty such institutions have been established since 1954.

Among the first institutions to offer journalism training in Africa were the church-related African Literature Centre in Kitwe, Zambia (which now regularly organizes and offers regional journalism courses every year), and the Institute of Journalism in Accra. In 1961, the Jackson College of Journalism (now the Department of Mass Communication at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka), began university-level journalism courses linked to literacy training. These courses continued until the civil war in 1967. Students of Jackson College were later transferred to the new Institute of Mass Communication at the University of Lagos to complete their degrees. This institute, assisted by UNDP/Unesco, has since grown to a student enrolment of 200 and offers specializations in broadcasting, public information, journalism and research for both diploma and degree levels. In 1973, the School of Journalism and Communication Studies at the University of Ghana was established, offering the only Master's degree course in journalism in sub-Saharan Africa.

In the mid-1960s, while the universities were gradually developing their journalism and/or communication departments, a series of short courses in technical journalism training helped to supply needed skills. The most sustained effort in this direction was made by the International Press Institute with funding from the Ford Foundation. Under this scheme, nine sets of six-month courses were held in Nairobi from 1963 to 1968 for East and Central Africa and another series was held in Lagos from 1964 to 1966 for West Africa. These efforts were instrumental in promoting the establishment of the School of Journalism at the University of Nairobi in 1970 and the Nigerian Institute of Journalism in 1971. From this, it can be seen that various institutes, schools and universities began offering formal journalism education only after the mid-1960s.

Aside from these training resources on the African continent, there have been the occasional short courses sponsored by various foundations or international agencies. Scholarships and mid-career fellowships have also provided the African journalist with opportunities for international study programmes in the Federal Republic of Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the USSR.

Considering the limited training resources on the continent, there has always been a need for some kind of regional inter-country co-operation. And yet, the actual number of regional training centres is very small. Only one institute can be identified as regional in concept, operation, and objectives. This is the Ecole supérieure internationale de journalisme de Yaoundé (E. S. I. J. Y.) in Cameroon. This school, an academic unit for the Federal University of Cameroon, was formed by an agreement among the financing countries: Cameroon, Central African Empire, Chad, Gabon, Rwanda and Togo. Two other centres operating on the regional level are the Centre d'études des sciences et techniques de l'information (CESTI) in Dakar (University of Senegal), and the Institute of Mass Communication (University of Lagos) in Nigeria. Several other centres and universities accept students from other countries, sometimes in large numbers, but these were not originally established to serve regional needs.

At the institutional level, there are two regional associations. One of these is the Association des réalisateurs de journaux ruraux en Afrique (ARJORA) which was created to unite the editors of rural newspapers, and enable them to exchange views, opinions and knowledge, and to discuss problems common to rural newspapers in Africa.

The second is the African Council on Communication Education, which is composed of the directors of training schools, centres of formation of journalists, and university departments oriented

to journalism, broadcasting or communication. Established to foster maximum co-operation in all aspects of communication training, the ACCE seeks to:(1)

1. Assess the training needs of African communication institutions and generate common solutions to these needs.
2. Assist in curriculum design at the request of African communication training institutions and encourage the circulation of the various curricula and course designs among the training institutions.
3. Evolve a system of accreditation among African communication training institutions and universities.
4. Find ways and means of student and staff exchange among African communication training institutions.
5. Promote regional workshop and training courses and initiate high-level training programmes for communication trainers.
6. Co-ordinate with other international organizations for research, information exchange and support.
7. Promote awareness in the African governments of the crucial role of mass media as an instrument for national development.

Synthesis

Numerous resources are available in Africa today for journalism training and research. In almost every major subregion there is at least one such institution. In more developed regions, there are a number of institutions providing learning resources either at the professional or academic level. The status of rural journalism today, however, is such that future development will be extremely difficult if not hazardous without the benefit of strong academic grounding and the formative influence of thorough research.

Before summarizing the key problems that rural newspapers face and proposing some approaches towards solving them in Chapter IV, Chapter III will provide a summary outline of the major rural newspapers.

(1) Unesco Report: Communication Education in Africa, Paris, Unesco, Division of Communication Systems, 1977.

TABLE III

MEDIA TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Africa Literature Centre	Kitwe	ZAMBIA
Centre de formation aux techniques de l'information	Niamey	NIGER
Centre d'études des sciences et techniques de l'information (CESTI)	Dakar	SENEGAL
Communications Training Centre, All Africa Conference of Churches	Nairobi	KENYA
Department of Mass Communication, University of Nigeria	Nsukka	NIGERIA
Ecole supérieure internationale de journalisme de Yaoundé (E. S. I. J. Y.)	Yaoundé	CAMEROON
Evelyn Hone College	Lusaka	ZAMBIA
Ghana Institute of Journalism	Accra	GHANA
Institut des sciences et techniques de l'information, Université nationale du Zaïre	Kinshasa	ZAIRE
School of Journalism and Communication Studies, University of Ghana	Legon	GHANA
Institute of Mass Communication	Lagos	NIGERIA
International Institute of Christian Communication	Nairobi	KENYA
Kenya Institute of Mass Communication	Nairobi	KENYA
Nigerian Institute of Journalism	Lagos	NIGERIA
Nigerian Broadcasting Staff Training School	Lagos	NIGERIA
Nyegesi Institute of Journalism	Nygezi	TANZANIA
School of Journalism, University of Nairobi	Nairobi	KENYA
School of Journalism, Institute of Public Administration	Kampala	UGANDA
School of Journalism, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting	Dar es Salaam	TANZANIA

CHAPTER III

Origins, Development and present situation country by country

BENIN

There are four rural newspapers in Benin, Kparo, Eunbuke, Imole, and Mi Se Nu, printed respectively in the local languages, Bariba, Adja, Yoruba and Fon.

Established in 1974, these papers were aimed at: literacy retention, further education, and mobilizing the rural population to effecting social, political, cultural and economic development.

A National Committee of the Rural Press was set up to decide on content and on the policies to be followed by newspapers. The committee was composed of representatives from the participating ministries and development agencies.

The first four years constituted a preparatory phase; the newspapers made little progress. In 1977, the standardization of alphabets, followed by a dynamic policy for the promotion of national languages in education and in the elimination of illiteracy, revealed that a development phase had commenced. With bilateral aid from Switzerland, the rural press in Benin will undoubtedly experience a marked growth.

BURUNDI

The Direction générale des publications de presse is responsible for issuing the publications of the Ministry of Information, maintaining a documentation service (and photograph library), and promoting rural cinema.

Projects for documentary periodicals are being considered. At present, this department's main activity is centred on the production and development of two newspapers:

Ubumwe, a weekly for rural areas in Kirundi. After several previous attempts, it appeared in a new form in March 1978: 3,000 copies, 12 pages, 23 x 32 cm format (folded) or 8 pages, 35 x 50 cm format (folded). The change in format depends on the working order of the printing presses.

Le Renouveau, a daily created in April 1978, carries national and international information in French: 1,500 copies, 12 pages, 23 x 32 cm format (folded).

The same method of printing (offset) is used for both newspapers; only the sources of information are different. The daily uses mainly the Agence burundaise de presse (ABP) international desk and correspondents with ministries; the weekly uses some of these same sources as well as ABP provincial and municipal correspondents' and readers' letters.

Since Burundi stresses the importance of rural communication, Ubumwe has priority. It must be sold at a price adapted to the buying power of the rural population. Its sales price is 5 FBU, while that of Le Renouveau is 20 FBU; the two cost prices (only technical operations and paper) are approximately the same (about 25 FBU per unit).

The technical production of the newspapers is carried out collaboratively by the editorial offices and the Imprimerie nationale burundaise (INABU). The composition and page make-up equipment is not satisfactory and often creates problems, but each partner (editorical office and printer) does his best to get the newspapers out on time. The offset printing is done by INABU. If the editors could obtain more sophisticated equipment for composition and titling, it would improve the technical quality of the newspapers and lower their cost prices. The fixed costs (composition and page make-up) for such low circulations are too high in comparison with the variable costs (printing hours and paper).

There is a temporary shortage of paper due to transport difficulties from the port of Dar es Salaam to Bujumbura. The same difficulties affect supplies of films, offset plates, chemical products, ink.

CAMEROON

Cameroon is one of the most linguistically and ethnically complex countries in Africa. Since several languages are spoken, the official policy encourages bilingualism, that is, use of either

French or English with African languages. Faced with this plurality of languages, it is difficult to establish rural newspapers in one local language, particularly as the target audience is further limited by a low literacy level.

The "Groupe de travail des informations rurales" (Working Group for Rural Information) was a project created to promote agricultural activities in the rural areas. The main objectives are information, training and popularization. This project was initiated by the government to further development of the rural areas by disseminating information through rural newspapers.

The most well-known rural newspaper in Cameroon is the "Bloc notes du monde rural", sponsored and managed by the "Fédération des églises et missions évangéliques du Cameroun". Published in French, it is oriented mainly towards rural development. The language used is simple and a great deal of emphasis is laid on illustrations and articles of a practical nature which can help the rural populations to solve their daily problems, especially those concerned with agriculture.

CENTRAL AFRICAN EMPIRE

The project envisaged by the Ministry of Functional Literacy in 1976 was realized when the first copy of the rural newspaper Linga, printed in the local language Sengo, was launched in September of the same year.

The Government of the Central African Empire felt the need to establish a rural newspaper as a means of retaining and continuing literacy. It was with this aim in view that it enlisted the aid of Unesco and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in convening a training course for communicators in 1976.

This multicopied newspaper published every month, started with a circulation of 500 copies, but this increased to 1,000 copies per issue due to the efficiency of the network of communicators, trained and organized during the initial training and planning period which preceded publication of Linga.

The editorial staff comprises a majority of government employees who have been given the responsibility for the publication of the newspaper. Contents are development-oriented articles in the main, written by officers in charge of rural development and literacy projects in the region. The management, volume, format and general policies of the newspaper are similar to those of other rural newspapers launched in Africa.

Although it has a limited circulation at present, the management of Linga foresees an increased circulation (2,000) after the National Pedagogic Institute has set up its own printing equipment bought with the help of funds contributed by UNDP.

CONGO

The Ministry of Permanent Education and Literacy, with bilateral French assistance, first published Sengo in 1972 as part of a rural development project. This newspaper, published in French, aimed to retain literacy and provide a means of continuing education in the region of the Stanley Pool.

It was not until 1973 that the publication became a nationally read newspaper as a result of a change in adult education policy. Although it was still edited on a 21 cm x 31 cm format, the objectives were widened to include development of the rural areas in all spheres, economic, social and cultural.

Sengo continues to be edited by the Ministry of Permanent Education and Literacy but with changes in the form and organization. The majority of the newspaper staff are employees of the Ministry. A full-time editor has been hired to take charge of the organizational responsibilities, but most of the work, including layout, planning, photography, printing, circulation and distribution, is handled by the Ministry staff.

The newspaper is printed on offset every month and has a circulation of 3,000 copies, sold at the price of 10 francs CFA per issue.

Despite the fact that several ministries contribute staff and facilities, several technical difficulties still persist: incomplete equipment facilities and irregular publication.

In April 1975, another rural newspaper La Forêt was launched in Pointe Noire as part of a literacy project, with the objective of literacy retention and further education in the rural areas. Sponsored and edited by the Direction de l'éducation populaire et de l'alphabétisation, this newspaper is organized in the same manner as Sengo, and consequently faces the same organizational and structural problems.

GHANA

Kpodoga

Apart from a research project newspaper entitled The Densu Times in English, which was published to measure the effect of a school community newspaper on literacy development and general knowledge attainment among middle-level students in rural areas, Kpodoga in Ewé is the only rural newspaper published in Ghana.

Kpodoga is officially attached to the Institute of Adult Education (IAE), and uses the services of the Ministries of Rural Development and Education.

The Institute of Adult Education chose Tsito-Awudome, where the IAE had a residential rural college, as a location for the newspaper. The readership included six communities or administrative districts in the Volta region. All these districts were economically, culturally and environ-

mentally similar. Although the main objective was to cultivate the reading habit among new literates, Kpodoga soon geared towards agricultural development as well.

The editorial staff is headed by an editor who is assisted by a co-ordinating reporter and local communicators (normally schoolteachers). None of the staff have had any formal training in journalism except the editor, who holds a diploma from the Ghana Institute of Journalism.

The co-ordinating reporter is responsible for the collection of news items from the local reporters and communicators in each village in the project area. These stories are written by the secretaries of the Village Development Committees, schoolteachers, social welfare officers of the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, working in the area. The newspaper staff live and work within the project area and are directly answerable to the Resident Tutor of the Institute, who checks all the copy before printing.

Newspaper content covers mainly local events or those national events that directly concern the community. Most of the stories deal with agriculture, health, environment, news about development which can be accomplished through self-help projects, sports and human interest. An effort is made to vary the news coverage in order to retain the interest of the reader. Agricultural articles are often reports written by extension officers regarding demonstrations on farms, or by experts on specific agricultural problems facing the local population. These are usually accompanied by photographs and illustrations to facilitate comprehension of the subject-matter and technique. Interviews with local personalities, readers' letters and entertainment strips make the newspaper popular with readers. Since its publication, only two advertisements have appeared in the newspaper; this is most likely due to a lack of an advertising strategy.

The newspaper does not have its own printing unit. After the dummy has been prepared and reaches the camera-ready stage at Tsito, the final printing is undertaken by the printing press of the Ministry of Information in Accra. Offset printing plates, chemicals and newsprint are supplied by the newspaper management.

The four-page Kpodoga has a monthly circulation of 5,000 copies and it is sold at the price of 5 Peshwar per copy. Distribution and circulation are handled by the editor himself, who also works as his own circulation manager. The copies are delivered by Kpodoga's delivery van to 25 agents, who sell these issues to the villagers and receive a commission of 30 per cent. Circulation has recently been experimentally extended to four other villages and towns outside the paper's coverage area. All these villages and towns are farming communities. Generally, almost all the newspaper copies are sold, with the exception of the complementary copies distributed to government ministries, other organizations and individual personalities. Readership includes literates, semi-literates, and even illiterates who get their friends and family members to read the newspaper aloud to them.

Problems faced by the newspaper management are similar to those confronted by most other rural publications. The major problem is the lack of a printing unit. Although Kpodoga can temporarily utilize the services of the printing press of the Ministry of Information, this is an arrangement which does not offer long-term prospects as the Ministry issues a large number of its own publications. Other difficulties include the shortage of supplies, films, newsprint and chemicals, a lack of trained staff and of sufficient financial revenue, either through subscriptions or advertisements.

Although immediate sales and the feedback from readers demonstrate the need for such a newspaper in the area where it is published, at present it is not economically viable.

IVORY COAST

Languages are so numerous in the Ivory Coast that it is difficult to select one which would be understood by a readership large enough to justify its use in the press. Due to this fact, the national authorities have chosen French as the language for education and literacy. The French language is taught in the primary-school sector; but the rural public literate in French is small in number and rather young. It is for this reason that there are as yet no rural newspapers in the Ivory Coast which could be compared with those in other African countries. However, some of the publications with a rural theme and their specific objectives are noted here.

Terre et Progrès

First published in 1973 by the National Office of Agricultural Development, this newspaper was created in order to disseminate agricultural news.

Articles are written by twenty or so officers of the Ministry of Agriculture, which is responsible for the organization and operation of the paper. Commercial printers are subcontracted for layout, composition and printing. Distribution is free, but its network is so complicated that it is difficult to estimate the type and number of readers.

The newspaper contains high-level technical articles on agriculture. They are well presented and abundantly illustrated. Although 60,000 copies of each issue containing 32 pages are printed every two months, the materials and their impact are difficult to judge, particularly as there is no feedback from readers.

Agripomo

Agripomo is published by the African Institute of Economic and Social Development (INADES). The

objective is to provide educational and practical material for ex-students of INADES, officers of rural development projects, animators and cultivators. Created in 1973, it is a 24-page bimonthly with a circulation of 5,000 copies.

Although it is aimed at the promotion of education in rural areas, those responsible for the paper believe that the reading public must participate in their education. The money received from sales covers the entire cost of production. Distribution is by post, through intermediairies or sales at local social functions.

Produced under the direction of two professional journalists, the articles are usually well written, accurate, abundantly illustrated and well presented. Each newspaper issue deals with a special theme of particular interest to rural development supervisors because of their approach to actual problems of agriculture. It is for this reason that the audience is sometimes limited to rural community workers rather than community members themselves.

Printed on INADES's own presses, regular publication proves no problem. The nature of the articles is such that the news content is not "dated" and publication of future issues can be postponed depending on sales. Each issue is priced at 200 francs CFA per issue. Most sales are through subscriptions costing 800 francs CFA per year.

KENYA

Bumanyati

Conceived as part of a rural print media project in Kenya, Bumanyati was first launched in June 1976, as a fortnightly in Swahili. This project, which resulted from an agreement between the Government of Kenya and the Government of the Netherlands, is in fact a Mobile Communication Laboratory (MCL). The only one of its kind in Africa, it is specially designed to find solutions to communication problems in rural areas.

The aim was to set up the project in such a way that the experience acquired during the course of project execution would indicate the techniques most suited to communication with the rural population.

The Vihiga Division, located in the south-western part of Kenya, was chosen for this project as it had the infrastructure necessary for rapid rural development. The mobile printing unit made available by the Government of the Netherlands was moved to Vihiga, as well as the personnel trained to operate it. A divisional development committee was convened at Vihiga and its members decided on the objectives and priorities for the project, keeping in mind the facilities of the mobile printing unit. As a result, Bumanyati was established as a newspaper with which the rural community could identify themselves.

Directed by the Ministry of Information, all activities of the micro-publishing unit, or "micropu", are handled by information officers, initially appointed by the Ministry and later trained in the Netherlands. A team of six is responsible for the production of the newspaper as well as its financial and administrative organization. Their tasks also include the development of effective relations with the government extension officers in the area, the local administration and local people, with the aim of developing an integrated communication system.

Almost forty per cent of the articles are contributed by readers and free-lance writers, including extension officers. The rest of the space is covered by readers' letters, paid advertisements from local businessmen and agricultural campaigns geared to community development.

Although the first issues of the four-page Bumanyati had a print run of 1,500 copies, the circulation for subsequent issues has increased. The last issue had a circulation of 4,000 copies. The newspaper is printed in the "micropu" which is equipped to produce a large and varied number of graphic information materials (in a short time, at a low cost and in any desired quantity) and to implement a programme of communication research primarily directed towards the use of the print media. It consists of a lorry and two separate containers. One container holds a communication laboratory with complete printing facilities. The second, called the information container, is designed for editorial purposes, inter-personal communication, evaluation and demonstration slides and films.

The "micropu" is mobile and can be stationed anywhere. This facility enables the field team to work on the spot on investigation or operation, thus arousing local curiosity and providing impetus for local participation.

Sales are haphazard and inconsistent due to the absence of an organized system. The field team sells the newspapers at public occasions (if and when they happen to take place when they are there), through schools and local leaders in various areas. An attempt is now being made to sell newspapers through 20 agents in Vihiga, 10 in Hamisi and 7 in Bunyore. Distribution problems, however, are further aggravated by the irregularity of publication.

Bumanyati faces many difficulties. For one, the mobile printing unit has been under-utilized. The printing of the newspaper takes only about four hours per issue and the press remains idle for the rest of the time until the following issue. Despite the advantage of having a printing unit, the newspaper is often published irregularly. Second, the journalists working on the project find heavy demands are made on their time by activities such as distribution and general organization. There is therefore a need for more trained reporters to cover the news of the target area more effectively. Third, the field team is handicapped by the lack of suitable transport for distribution purposes.

Bumanyati is dependent on financial subsidies for survival. It has a long way to go before it can become self-supporting. At present, it uses the MCL for printing purposes, but this project will require restructuring in order to assure future prospects. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is considering the possibility of handing over the responsibility of this publication to a group of enterprising journalists after the mobile printing unit is withdrawn by the Government of the Netherlands upon completion of the project.

Kisomo

This is the only rural newspaper in East Africa that grew almost spontaneously out of a demand for a local newspaper made by the rural population. Created to fill the vacuum which ensued when the local paper Murang'a Today ceased publication, Kisomo was launched with the help of Unesco in 1975 with the following objectives:

to provide reading material for new literates;
to publish local news and information geared to economic, political and social development;
to promote the development of youth and elevate the role of women in the community;
to promote and explain government policies to the rural population;
to provide effective communication at grass-roots level;
to teach and promote national languages;
to entertain.

The contents are varied. The front page normally carries the leading articles which are usually on farming, social or economic themes. Other pages contain information on trade practices, coffee and tea farming, cattle husbandry, pig farming, and the possibility of loans for local farmers through government rural development schemes. Like Bumanyati, Kisomo also carries paid advertising, although there are not very many advertisements appearing in the newspaper, due mainly to the lack of serious effort on the part of the newspaper management.

Kisomo is a four-page newspaper with a circulation of 5,000 copies. After preliminary preparations for the publication have been made by the editor in Marung'a, the materials are taken to Nairobi where the printing is done by a commercial firm.

Distribution of the newspaper is done mainly through trading centres, shops, markets and schools. Some sales are also carried out through 120 agents appointed throughout the district. The newspaper is sold for 30 cents and the agents are given a 10 per cent commission for selling it. Issues are transported by the staff of the Kisomo who, at the same time, collect sales revenue for previous issues and claim unsold copies. Most of the newspapers are sold in the densely populated division of Kangema and Kiharu, followed by Kigumo, Kandar and Makuyu. They are read by adults as well as by teachers and students in the educational institutions.

On the whole, Kisomo has good growth potential in a densely populated district such as Murang'a, which has the necessary infrastructure and economic potential to support a rural newspaper.

LIBERIA

Liberia was one of the first African countries to create a rural newspaper system. The publication of the first issue of Gbarnga Gbele News in April 1965, marked the beginning of a rural revolution in the interior of Liberia. Although before the end of that year there were as many as thirty of these two-columned, brightly titled, neatly mimeographed newspapers covering the entire country in areas where no newspapers had existed before, only eight of these rural publications so successfully launched, still continue to exist today. Of these, six are published by the Government Regional Information Centre, one by Grand Gedeh County and one by a religious mission. The rural newspapers now published in Liberia are the following:

1. Gbehzohn Dupka in Grand Bassa County;
2. Maryland News in Maryland County;
3. Bong County News;
4. Sanniequellie Sun in Nimba County;
5. Lofa County Monthly News;
6. Grand Gedeh News;
7. Webbo World published by Grand Gedeh County;
8. Ganta News published by the United Methodist Church.

The rural newspaper project was sponsored by the Liberian Information Service, and was undertaken following demands by people living in rural areas for a newspaper of their own. In addition, government agencies such as those of education, health and agriculture, wanted a means of communicating with the local population. Since the level of literacy was about 10 to 12 per cent, there were sufficient literates to read the newspapers both for themselves and for others, thus encouraging literacy training as well.

Once launched, rural newspapers thus aimed to stimulate the literacy programme, help nationwide re-dissemination of news and make printed news available to most Liberians living in rural areas.

Confronted with a decision on the choice of language for these newspapers and needing to cater for 90 per cent of the nation's population living in the interior with about 28 groups speaking 16 different languages, the government decided to resolve the problem by printing in English.

The newspaper's organization depends upon its situation, the availability of facilities and personnel. Most staff members are employed by the Government Information Centre and have access to mimeographing facilities. None of them have had any training in journalism.

The collection of news follows a planned agenda. Information is collected from various development agency officials, as well as regular morning news broadcasts which are monitored for national and international news. Newspaper contents present a good balance between information and entertainment. The editor generally draws heavily on traditional legends, folklore and proverbs which represent their rich and varied culture. The Liberian Information Service also helps the editors to supplement their news content by distributing prepared feature articles.

Distribution poses a problem: transport in rural districts is scarce. Some copies are distributed free of charge to government offices, schools, clinics, churches, stores, various offices and a few nearby towns.

Most of these rural newspapers initially had connections with radio stations and selected news items printed in the rural newspapers were transmitted to both urban and rural populations. The situation today is very different. The majority of the publications are nothing but "duplicated newssheets" distributed irregularly. Many have ceased publication.

The problems faced by the Liberian rural newspapers which have resulted in their eventual closure are similar to those confronting most local publications in rural areas of the African subcontinent. The organizational aspects of these newspapers are such that their long-term perspectives are not taken into consideration when they are initially launched. Consequently, as soon as the animator or project director leaves the region, publication ceases. Of those which survive, many are published irregularly because of shortage of imported newsprint, and the problems of administration and overdependence on the parent organization. If the future of the existing eight rural newspapers in Liberia is to be ensured, organizational problems must be solved.

MALI

Kibaru

Mali's well-known rural newspaper Kibaru, launched in 1972, is published by the Malian Ministry of Information in the Bambara language. Originally under the control and guidance of the Ministry of Information and the Mali National Information Agency (A. N. I. M.), Kibaru was intended to be multipurpose in nature and aimed at informing the public and furthering rural development.

The editorial committee was responsible for news content and comprised representatives of government organizations covering different aspects of development. These included members from the Departments of Functional Literacy and Applied Languages, the Institute of Rural Economy, the Water and Forestry Department, the Organization for Regional Development, the Department of Social Affairs and the Departments of Education and Public Health.

This committee was placed under the direction of the Editor-in-Chief of Kibaru who was responsible for the practical aspect of the publication. However, committee members who held responsible positions in their respective organizations found it difficult to devote sufficient time to assemble, discuss and work actively for the newspaper. The committee was consequently replaced by the Council of Editors, thus enabling the Editor to consult the members individually when the need arose, while financial handling of subscriptions and distributions became the responsibility of A. N. I. M. (now the Agence nationale de presse et publicité - A. N. P. P.).

Kibaru's main objective is to bring articles of varied interest constantly to the newly literate and semi-literate population, thus encouraging the habit of reading. In addition to current events, it offers developmental information which is aimed at augmenting standards of health, agriculture, living conditions and civic consciousness through increased awareness.

The newspaper staff consists of an Editor-in-Chief, a representative of the Department of Functional Literacy, two sub-editors and a newswriter; most of these members are information/animation officers recruited from the region (usually teachers, instructors, rural development agents, etc.). They are exposed to a brief training period, including news editing techniques, methods of popularizing articles, newspaper layouts and distribution. The contents and subject-matter are selected by the Editor-in-Chief and the representative of the Department of Functional Literacy, while the actual collection of articles and publication details are the responsibility of the other staff members.

A period of 15 days is given for the submission of articles and news events, which are collected through a network of rural communicators. A second selection then takes place, taking into account the printed surface available for the written material, photographs, illustrations and cartoons and the final copy is forwarded to A. N. I. M. for approval before printing.

Kibaru publishes national or regional news concerning the rural areas, international news of great importance, education information (techniques for improving agriculture, health, sanitation systems, family life, handicrafts, fishing, etc.), and discussion and exchange of views between rural and urban populations, which includes attempts at initiating dialogues. Letters to the editor are given a specially large coverage as they are a valuable means for rural readers to identify the newspaper as their own project.

Kibaru is printed at the State-owned printing house (Editions imprimérie du Mali - E. D. I. M.) which is equipped with an offset system. After publication, the printed copies are transported to

A.N.I.M. for sales and distribution. In 1972, Kibaru started with a circulation of 5,000 copies using a 25 x 35 cm format containing four pages of written material and illustrations; today it is an 8-10 page newspaper with a circulation of 12,500. Subscriptions are sold for a token fee, the price being slightly higher outside the country; complimentary copies are distributed to personalities and organizations or services (in exchange for other magazines or newspapers). Money collected from sales is delivered to A.N.I.M. and distributors receive a commission of 10 per cent. Distribution and sales are carried out through a system organized by the Department of Functional Literacy. This is a somewhat complicated process involving the initial dispatch of the newspapers to regional directors, who distribute them to directors of the Department of Functional Literacy, who, in turn, arrange for the eventual distribution and sales to rural readers.

As it is a monthly publication, Kibaru does not have the character of a daily newspaper. In-depth articles replace coverage of recent events and daily occurrences, thus making the newspaper more of an educational medium.

The newspaper management faces a number of difficulties. Most of these involve delays in publication due to dependence on the schedule of the government-owned press and an over-complicated distribution system.

In spite of these problems, Kibaru has enjoyed a fair amount of success as is evident from its mounting circulation. This success relates directly to the preceding literacy programme in Bambara and the newspaper's association with the Malian Radio Rural Broadcast Programme, which has an important weekly programme on Kibaru and its news content.

NIGER

Niger followed Liberia in the early establishment of a rural press. In 1964, the fear that 20,000 new literates were likely to return to illiteracy if an effort was not made immediately, mobilized government efforts and resulted in the creation of Gangaa (Tam-Tam). This mimeographed monthly was placed under the direction of the Ministry of Literacy and Education and was published in three languages - Hawsa, Zarma and French.

Though it was originally launched to provide reading material for new literates, the newspaper later took on new objectives. Aware of the role that information can play in moving people towards development and progress, the Government of Niger decided to establish a paper offering not only local news, but news of national and international interest. It encouraged suggestions and open dialogue from the rural audiences which facilitated an exchange of opinions and aired general problems. It served thus as a medium not only of education, but also of development.

The contents of Gangaa are more or less the same as those of other rural newspapers. Keeping in mind the audience of new and semi-literates, the paper presents local, regional and national news which is pertinent to the lives of the rural population. In addition, it contains developmental information, entertainment material (selected to be educative as well as amusing), illustrations, cartoons and occasional advertisements. The printed letter column, representing the readers' personal involvement in the project, is a means of bridging the gap between the development planners and rural populations and is therefore of particular interest.

Edited and printed at the National Printing House using the offset system, the newspaper has a circulation of 2,500 and is printed on a 25 x 32 cm format, its volume varying from four to twenty-four pages.

The price of the newspaper is minimal as major expenses are borne by the government. Some issues are sold, but the revenue received from their sales is of hardly any significance. Complimentary copies are also issued mainly to dignitaries or organizations and services (in exchange for their magazines or newspapers).

Started as a trilingual newspaper in 1974 (Hawsa, Zarma and French), Gangaa has become multilingual, publishing now in Tamasheq, Kanuri and Fulfulde in addition to the three original languages. Its circulation, however, has not increased (since 1974, 3,000 copies per month). Departmental offices producing multi-copied bulletins have made no more progress except for Tillaberi, which now has an offset machine under the Swiss bilateral assistance project.

Table IV gives an idea of the proliferation of these rural newspapers which are really decentralized.

RWANDA

With a density of 160 inhabitants per square kilometre, a literacy rate of 50 per cent and one national language (Kinyarwanda), this African State is ideal for the development of rural communications. There is an active national press and the Rwanda Office of Information (ORINFOR), in co-operation with UNDP, is preparing to develop a network of village reporters and information resources. Three newspapers are already being published - Kinyamateka, Hobe and Imvaho.

Kinyamateka

This newspaper was launched in Kigali in 1933 by the Catholic Mission. Published in the national

TABLE IV

RURAL NEWSPAPERS IN NIGER

Area	Title and Language	Periodicity	Circulation
Madaoua	Saabon Ra'Yii - Hawsa	monthly	200
Maradi	Kasaa May Albarka - Hawsa	bi-monthly	1,000
Zinder	Muryar Damagaram - Hawsa	bi-monthly	100
Magaria	Amfaanin Kay - Hawsa	monthly	500
Agadez	Alpishirinku - Hawsa Tamasheq	bi-monthly	250
Tchintabaraden	Is Lan Dagn Tamajeq - Tamasheq	monthly	350
Tahoua	Tarmaamun Aadar - Hawsa	monthly	100
Dosso	Boro Coyo Gati Borcin Tarey - Hawsa/Zarma	monthly	1,000
Tillaberi	Jine Koy Yan - Zarma	monthly	175
Diffa	Mangaari Kuu Ye - Kanuri	monthly	500
Tessaoua	Ilimii Arzikin Kasaa	monthly	100
Matameye	Albarkar Tsirkaw	monthly	100

(Source: Report on Rural Press by Cherif Fall and Bernard Kouleu.)

language, it was created to provide the general public (including illiterates who could have the newspapers read to them by relatives or friends) with information regarding government policies, development projects and culture; practical problems and their solutions were also to be covered by various articles.

The newspaper does not have its own printing unit, but uses the facilities of the Catholic Printing Press in Kabgayi. Its contents consist of articles which are development-oriented, national and international news, features on religious life, agriculture, youth and civic education. Also covered are descriptions concerning Rwanda's culture, and readers' letters and information regarding government projects, sports news and publicity (this covers one-fifth of the newspaper's contents but is not a predominant source of income for the newspaper). Each issue costs 5 Rwandese francs with an annual subscription of 100 Rwandese francs (120 Rwandese francs by post).

The newspaper seems to have considerable support in rural areas although it faces financial and staffing problems; despite this fact, it envisages an increased circulation and the addition of a "Women's page" devoted to instruction in child education, for the future.

Hobe

This is a monthly rural newspaper which commenced publication in 1955 in the national language and is run by the Catholic Mission. It caters for the needs of a special audience, aiming to provide simple printed material for children who are studying in schools and for those who are either educational drop-outs or who have not been able to gain admission to a school. Its specific objectives are to encourage the habit of reading from an early age and, in this way, provide a means of continuous education as well as bridging the gaps left by a formal education system.

The editor of the newspaper changes often and the staff situation is very unstable. The mission is considering appointing a local part-time editor for the newspaper.

Its contents range from articles on education, religion and history, to replies to questions posed by children and illustrated stories taken from Rwanda's rich folklore.

The 8-page newspaper, with its 19 x 28 cm format, is printed at the Catholic Printing Works in Kabgayi and sold by subscription. Eight issues cost 30 Rwandese francs, which is an increase of 10 Rwandese francs since 1976. Despite this increase, Hobe's popularity can be judged by the number of subscriptions which is listed as being 57,000.

Although efforts are being made to enlist the help of various organizations, the future of Hobe still remains uncertain.

Imvaho

The Rwanda Information Office launched an 8-12 page, 22 x 31 cm format, newspaper with a circulation of 5,000-6,000 copies in 1962. It is published weekly in the national language by the National Printing Press in Kigali.

This publication is oriented towards mass education with particular emphasis on the isolated rural masses so as to establish a means of dialogue, discussion and exchange of information between the economically rich centres and the less developed interior areas. The contents are therefore educational and developmental in nature, touching on various aspects of economic, social and cultural life.

Each issue is priced at 5 Rwandese francs, the annual subscription being 100 Rwandese francs.

It is interesting to note that in Rwanda the religious missions have played a significant role in the education of the rural population. They have emphasized the importance of youth education in and out of schools and have covered those areas of information which are normally not included in the syllabus of formal education.

Of the three newspapers catering predominantly for the needs of the semi-literate and illiterate population of the rural areas, two of them are published by the Catholic Missions.

TANZANIA

Tanzania is well on its way to establishing a veritable rural press. It is experimenting with the largest and most ambitious rural newspaper project in the whole of East Africa.

The Rural Press Project in the four lake regions of Mwansa, Mara, Shinyanga and West Lake, was started in January 1974, as an integral part of a UNDP-Unesco assisted functional literacy programme. Officially known as the "Functional Literacy Curriculum, Programmes and Materials Development Project", this programme was intended to promote literacy using radio education, rural libraries and post-literacy discussion groups in an integrated rural communication system.

The Rural Press Project (financed by NORAD) places great emphasis on the production of its monthly newspaper Elimu Haina Mwisho (Education has no end), which is the largest circulating rural newspaper in East Africa with a circulation of 100,000 published in Swahili, the national and official language of Tanzania and understood by the vast majority of Tanzanians, Elimu Haina Mwisho enjoys immense popularity and is found to be widely read and enjoyed (report on the study of the working of the rural newspaper programme in the lake regions by E. P. R. Mbakile and F. M. K. Kashushura, April 1977).

Placed under the management of the Rural Press Project Department, the paper was initially

launched in 1974 with a circulation of 5,000. It circulates mainly in Musoma, Serengeti, Magu, Mwanza, Ukerewe, Shinyanga, Buloba and Muleba districts of the lake regions.

The specific objectives officially enumerated were to: provide materials for new literates; ensure continuity of education; keep the rural population informed of local, regional and national events; provide readers with practical information in social, economic and cultural fields; inculcate the habit of reading newspapers; initiate the establishment of a decentralized local press, and encourage the rural population to express themselves in this press and thus participate and contribute actively in the development of the nation.

The Rural Press Project has a staff of thirty. The Chief Editor is responsible to the Assistant Director of Adult Education, within the Ministry of National Education, stationed in Dar es Salaam. The sub-editors in the field, in reality reporters or correspondents, come under the direction of the District or Regional Education Officers.

Most of the members of the editorial staff are former journalists, many of them former teachers or civil servants, who have been trained or rather retrained by means of specially conducted seminars, workshops and short courses.

Information is collected by sub-editors and voluntary reporters (locals, usually schoolteachers) who send in information, news and articles for publication in Elimu Haina Mwisho. Nine voluntary reporters have been appointed though only four are active. Most of the articles are collected from the local areas, edited and sent for publication.

A four-page tabloid newspaper, Elimu Haina Mwisho reports national, local and sometimes international news deemed to be of interest to its readers. An attempt is often made to interpret this news and relate it to local needs. News is generally departmentalized according to the following themes - farming, education, health, and social services. Local news of general interest, letters to the editor, commentaries, announcements, service-articles, pictures and illustrations are abundantly used and found to be very popular with the readers.

There are no printing problems as the Rural Press Project is equipped with its own printing press, complete offset processing and reproduction equipment, composing machines, graphic materials, cutting and stapling equipment. Every month, 100,000 copies of the Elimu Haina Mwisho are printed and distributed.

Distribution, however, has been one of the major difficulties facing the newspaper. The problem, as yet unsolved, lies not only in developing an efficient distribution system but also in determining who actually gets the newspaper. The distribution system follows the administrative channels of the Ministry of National Education right down to the village and classroom level, with the concentration of the distribution personnel at the village level. The newspaper is sent from the rural press office to the District Education Office, using the existing public transport system - buses and trains. From the District Education Office, the newspapers are forwarded to the Divisional Education Office from where they are in turn forwarded to the districts. From the districts the newspapers go to the literacy groups and individual readers. The newspaper takes a long time to reach its readers and this weakness is accentuated during the rainy season when communication facilities become increasingly more difficult.

The newspaper was previously distributed free to literacy classes, but is now sold for 10 cents a copy. The distribution agents, normally civil servants distributing the newspaper as an extra part of their official duties, do not receive any commission for selling the newspaper.

Many problems are faced by the administration. The organization of the newspaper itself is not streamlined enough for maximum efficiency. The main problem with the management is the lack of proficiency in the editorial and technical skills required in producing a newspaper. Journalism training and orientation in Tanzania, as elsewhere in Africa, is directed towards the generalist, urban-oriented and élitist newspapers that dominate the journalistic scene. Rural journalism is a new adjunct to the profession, which requires not only a rural orientation but a comprehension of rural life, problems and cultural framework.

The pricing policy, which can be an important factor as far as supporting a rural newspaper with little or no advertising is concerned, remains unresolved. There are plausible arguments for both selling and not selling the newspaper, but the readers' lack of financial resources and the absence of newspaper reading habits block any definite decisions regarding the future.

Despite these problems and the resulting limitations, the newspaper undoubtedly plays an important role in the lives of the rural people of the four lake regions.

TOGO

Two rural newspapers are published in Togo: Game Su, initially published in 1972 in the local language Ewé, and Tew Fema, launched in 1977 in the language of Kabye. Published under the direction of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, these papers were envisaged as a means of retaining literacy and therefore a continuation of the rigorous adult literacy programme already carried out in Togo, since 1969. This primary objective was later widened to include economic, social and cultural development in the rural areas by creating an awareness of the existing conditions, its advantages and drawbacks, and creating a desire to improve the system, by more detailed information.

An interministerial committee, composed of representatives from the various government Departments of Literacy, Education and Health, Agriculture, Information and National Education, is responsible for the selection of the contents of the newspapers, while the Editor-in-Chief takes charge of the editing and production.

Constant difficulties arise since this committee must assemble in order to take decisions regarding the newspapers' policy and contents. Other advisers, more easily accessible, are the officers of the Literacy Department who approve the final draft of the newspaper and therefore the contents before its publication.

The newspaper staff of each of these newspapers consists of an Editor-in-Chief, a representative of the Department of Functional Literacy, and a number of communicators. Most of the staff members, however, are not trained journalists but residents of the area, who are given on-the-job training in newspaper techniques. A few of them were participants in earlier rural development or literacy programmes and therefore are aware of local problems and traditions.

The Editor-in-Chief selects the newspaper articles, letters and general layout forms. A time period of 15 days is normally given to the reporters/communicators to collect the information and submit the articles. The punctuality of reporting and printing does not always depend on the period of time set by the Editor. The final copy is vetted by the officers of the National Literacy Department, who approve the format and arrange for the setting of the "dummy" in their office premises before sending it for printing.

Newspaper contents of Game Su and Tew Fema comprise educational articles concerning health, agriculture, social problems, political and civic training, local news and illustrations, as well as letters to the editor. These are given great importance as they pinpoint the problems of the rural populations and are a means of conducting a discussion and dialogue between the technocrats who make decisions and the people who are affected by these decisions.

Both newspapers are printed at a private press, EDITOGO (Etablissement des éditions du Togo), equipped with an offset system, and then transported to different government departments, local markets and shops for distribution and sales. After five years of existence, Game Su is published on a 25 x 32 cm format containing four pages of written materials and illustrations, and has a circulation of 2,500 copies read by an estimated 6,000 readers.

Subscriptions are sold for a token fee (the price of the paper is not covered from the amount received through sales) and so far there are only 240 annual subscriptions listed on the official files.

Distribution and sales are organized either by the Department of Functional Literacy which, after receiving the newspapers, dispatches, redistributes them amongst volunteers and communicators, who in their turn arrange for their sales at local markets, specialized agencies or established institutions such as the village schools, depots, etc., or by the Editor himself who delivers the newspapers to the local stores and local agents who arrange for sales among the rural population, and receive a 10 per cent commission in return for their services.

Problems faced by the two papers are almost the same as those faced by the local papers in the rural areas of other African countries: physical distances, bad transport and communication facilities; lack of a specialized printing press; high-cost printing budget and a lack of professional training for journalists and communicators.

It is hoped by the editorial staff that they can eventually cut down on printing costs and prevent delays in publication after the installation of a press suited to their particular needs. A plan is already under way to set up such a press with the help of Oeuvre-suisse d'entraide ouvrière (OSEO).

UPPER VOLTA

The Government of Upper Volta decided to establish rural newspapers after the Conference of Educational Ministers held in Tehran (in 1965) to discuss literacy and its problems. At present, three rural newspapers, l'Essor Rural, Fasobaara and Manegre are published.

L'Essor Rural

The first edition of l'Essor Rural was published in French in July 1973, with financial assistance from the Oxford Family Movement of the United Kingdom. Placed under the direction of the Ministry of Rural Development, the newspaper was launched to inform rural development officers and rural community workers about the technical details of development procedures. An information sheet, rather than a rural newspaper, it never aimed at the illiterate or semi-literate populations.

Intended to maintain a liaison between development officers and provide them with information concerning rural development, this newspaper has three objectives in view:

the diffusion of technical information regarding rural sectors;

the training of all officers working for development programmes;

the reinforcement of relationships between different rural development groups.

The permanent staff of the Committee of Coordination of the Ministry of Rural Development is responsible for the publication of the newspaper. This committee is directly attached and answerable to the Ministry Cabinet. The production is placed under the charge of an interministerial committee, which comprises all the ministers

except the Minister of Justice. In fact, this committee does not assemble very frequently as most members hold important government positions and have limited time at their disposal.

Most of the newspaper work is carried out by the staff composed of a Director, who also happens to be the Permanent Secretary of the Co-ordination Committee of Rural Development, an Editor-in-Chief, and reporters, who are also agricultural specialists. The role of the Chief Editor is limited as the choice of articles is made by the committee according to the subject or theme of the month.

Articles are normally of a technical nature and contributed by the heads of interested services or other members of the staff. These articles are seldom collected from the rural areas and often have little relevance to the rural population itself.

According to an analysis of a number of newspaper issues, 60 per cent of space is devoted to articles concerning agriculture, animal breeding, water and forests, mines and the like; and 30 per cent is earmarked for information concerning literacy and the standard of living. General information, civic information and readers' letters occupy little or no newspaper space. No coverage is given to general or local news, cartoons, illustrations, entertainment or publicity. There is little feedback. The Newspaper Committee is planning to rectify this void by sending out questionnaires to find out the views of readers.

The process of offset being expensive, the voluminous 25- to 48-page newspaper is multicopied every month. L'Essor Rural, printed on a 21 cm x 27 cm format, has a circulation of 2,000 and is sold at the price of 100 francs CFA per issue. Considering the cost of living in the area of Upper Volta, the price of the newspaper is exhorbitant. This is why local shops and markets do not accept to sell newspaper copies. Most issues of the newspaper are sold by subscription. The eleven Regional Organizations of Development, development officers and various government offices are systematically subscribers. Often it is the administration which pays the subscriptions for all development agents. Of the total issues only 100 are sold through local shops, the rest through subscriptions. The advantage of this system being that most issues are sold.

Although distribution procedures are well established, other difficulties are faced by the newspaper management, especially lack of experienced staff, poor infrastructure, shortage of printing assistants, and management, technical and financial problems.

L'Essor Rural appears regularly and has never missed an issue since its inception. Two reasons explain this regularity of publication: first, the need of development agents constantly to review their information; second, being financed by the government, its regularity is assured.

Most readers find that the newspaper lacks light news items and articles of general interest. Although the standard on the whole is not too elevated, comprehension problems often arise due to the technical nature of the subject-matter. To be a rural newspaper in the real sense of the term and reach a larger rural audience, either l'Essor Rural must be remodelled or the government must create another newspaper which caters specifically for the needs of a different rural audience.

Fasobaara

The National Commission of Voltaic languages launched the rural monthly newspaper Fasobaara in 1973, to fulfil the needs of the Bobo-Dioulasso region. This newspaper is printed in the local language, Jula, and has a circulation of 3,000 copies.

Manegre

The rural newspaper Manegre was first published in the local language, Moore, in 1975, with the specific objective of retaining literacy. Created as a follow-up of various literacy programmes in the area, it is the responsibility of the Savoir et développement, organisation voltaïque pour l'éducations des adultes (O. V. E. A.). Only two issues have so far been published. Created originally as a bi-monthly, the association hopes to publish it every month and change its structure to include wider developmental objectives.

Editing of the articles, layout and planning is carried out by the members of the O. V. E. A. with the help of the animators of the literacy centres and regional officers. The choice of contents and composition of the newspaper is the responsibility of the Editing Committee which comprises five members (all are members of O. V. E. A.): one director of publicity, three technical specialists (of agriculture, rural animation and linguistics and culture), and one editing assistant. Articles are written on the initiative of the editors or on topics suggested by the Editing Committee.

The contents are often articles of reflection (importance of values and literacy); regional and national news items; articles on women; professional and technical training opportunities; and the solution of practical problems in the form of precautions and measures against natural phenomena. Entertainment is provided in the shape of occasional cartoons, illustrations or even publicity. Most of the contents, however, are more suited to a review than a bi-monthly newspaper publication.

The paper has a total circulation of 1,250 copies. These are typed by the staff of the O. V. E. A., stencilled, and then multicopied on the equipment belonging to the association. Compiling, binding and dispatching are accomplished with the help of members of the organization and a local youth movement.

Distribution is handled by the organization and the intermediaries responsible for the literacy

and regional development programmes. Most of the issues are sold at literacy centres at the price of 25 francs CFA per issue.

ZAMBIA

While all the East African countries have tried to establish local or regional papers, Zambia alone can boast of one of the most extensive regional newspaper networks in Africa.

Zambia's leadership in this respect dates back to the colonial times when the Northern Rhodesian Government published its first issue of Mutende (meaning "Greetings"). This paper had a circulation of 5,000 and was published in four languages - English, Bemba, Lozi and Nyanja. It was printed at the Government Press. The objectives of the paper were to inform the people about the government's policies, new laws, and cover news about the African people on the farms, mines and towns. Started as a monthly, the paper later became a weekly and modified its contents to report more local than political news. In 1952, it ceased publication and was superseded by two other newspapers, The American Eagle, published by a commercial company based in Salisbury called The African Newspapers Limited; and The African Listener, published by the Northern Rhodesia Broadcasting Station, intended mainly to give background information for radio listeners. After independence, the Zambian Government took control of the existing newspapers, and changed their titles, contents and objectives, in an attempt to make them African in character.

At present, Zambia Information Services (ZIS) publishes six monthly newspapers in all the major languages - a unique experiment in rural newspaper publishing. The largest provincial newspaper is Imbila with a circulation of 27,000. A 16-page monthly, it covers the Northern, Luapula, and Copperbelt Provinces, and part of the Central Province, an area inhabited mainly by Bemba-speaking Zambians. News is collected by information officers and reporters and dispatched to Ndola, Zambia's third largest city for editing, printing and distribution.

The second largest provincial newspaper is Tsopano, another 16-page monthly with a circulation of 12,000, published in Nyanja and distributed in the Eastern, Lusaka and Central Provinces. The 12-page rural newspaper Lisela-Zambia has the third largest circulation of 8,700 copies. It is published in Lozi and distributed in the Western and Southern Provinces.

Intanda, a 12-page newspaper with a circulation of 7,000, is published in Tonga and distributed in the Southern Province. A bilingual newspaper in Bemba and Lenje, the 12-page monthly Lukanga, with a circulation of 6,500, is also distributed in Lusaka and the Central Provinces. The newspaper with the smallest circulation is Ngoma, a 12-page monthly with a circulation of 3,000 copies published in three languages - Lunda, Luvale and Kaonde. It is distributed in the North-Western and Copperbelt Provinces.

All these five newspapers are edited and printed in the capital city of Lusaka. As in the case of Imbila, district information officers and reporters collect the news and send it to Lusaka, where it is edited and printed at the government-owned Zambia Printing Company. The newspapers are then air freighted to the provinces for distribution in the districts.

These newspapers are sold by subscription or by street purchase. Although it is not a policy of the Zambian Government to distribute its periodicals free, it does attempt to encourage readership by keeping the sales price low.

These Zambian newspapers are heavily subsidized. They are used as a means of communicating government messages and are not newspapers with which the members of the rural communities can identify themselves. Even as such, their circulation indicates their success and in the absence of a commercialized rural press, they serve as a useful link between the urban and rural centres.

CHAPTER IV

Perspectives for rural journalism

Among the rural newspapers covered in this survey, from the barest mimeo sheet to the four-colour offset tabloid, a number of recurring problems become obvious. These can be generally classified under the following categories: training, economic viability, printing facilities and management.

Ironically, there also exist on the continent other institutions that can be associated with the work of rural journalism to make it more effective, more widespread, and more financially and structurally autonomous. These are the several research and training institutions which have grown up side by side with the spread of rural newspapers, but have rarely, and with little impact, had any influence on the development of an African rural press.

Training in rural journalism

One of the most striking conclusions to emerge from this survey is that most of the editorial staff of the African rural newspaper are self-taught, self-trained, with little or no professional training. Only the Editor of Ghana's rural newspaper Kpodoga holds a university degree in journalism. The other editors are officers of extension services, schoolteachers, cultural animators, social workers, and rural development agents, who had to learn journalism from their own personal "on-the-job" experiences.

There are many reasons for this lack of formal communication education. The most evident reason is the origin of the newspapers in literacy or development projects, not in institutes or schools of journalism. Furthermore, most journalism schools are oriented towards city-journalism which is not relevant to the needs, aspirations, conditions and problems of the rural milieu. Although there are as many as 18 schools, institutes and universities which now offer journalism courses (see Table III), not one of them offers a course in rural journalism. Most training imparted to prospective journalists is geared towards fulfilling the needs of urban areas. This is doubtless a reflection of the metropolis-based structure of most mass media in Africa. Consequently, the contribution of these existing journalism schools and institutes to the training of rural journalists is almost non-existent despite the fact that they could provide the essential framework for it.

If media schools were to begin teaching rural journalism today, many would be hard to put to compose a syllabus and reading list. There is no systematic compilation of published information on rural journalism as it is being practised in Africa. There are few textbooks, sources for descriptive data, benchmark studies, or any kind of evaluative or formative research. Initially, many schools would face a difficult time trying to accredit this course in their universities, or recruiting professors qualified both in terms of academic background and actual journalism experience. This is stated here not to discourage efforts in this direction, but to underline some of the reasons why these courses have not been launched and to pinpoint some of the obstacles that must be overcome before trying to initiate such courses.

Over and above these problems, rural journalism simply does not attract the investments, personnel, training facilities and research. Therefore, to most people, rural journalism means a meagre salary, working for a newspaper of very small circulation with meagre financial or professional benefits. Few would wish to opt for such a career, and less so to study for it. The few who would may not always have the financial means to enrol for studies, especially if this would require the added expense of travelling to another country.

Economic viability

It is striking to note that in the case of the 46 newspapers in this study, not one of them is financially independent or self-supporting. All are dependent on government subsidies for their existence, owing to the structure of their organization and sponsorship by a government ministry or development agency (see Table III). As a result, they have

never had to think of economic viability, sales or advertising. But dependence on a subsidy does not assure the continuity of these newspapers, nor does it offer any incentives for expanding and developing them.

In order to be financially independent, a newspaper must be organized in such a manner that the cost of production is covered by sales and advertising revenue. Organization must take into account the socio-economic ability of the target audience, sales and advertising revenue, costs of production, distribution, sales and collection, and explore the promotion possibilities of using other related media. This is an area where empirical research could assist vitally to determine economic feasibility and forecast growth rates. If these newspapers are eventually to survive at all, they must first be able to survive their own present subsidy.

While it is true that most newspapers are based in rural, generally poor areas, very few have attempted to initiate even a token price structure or experiment with paid subscriptions. While some have tried to solicit advertising, the mechanism for collecting such revenue often costs more than the income derived from it. This is another fertile field for research: attitudes and obstacles to paying for a newspaper; determination of the economic capability of newspaper villages and towns; cost estimating the financial autonomy of a new rural newspaper. As research has heretofore not tackled such problems, they still remain without solutions.

Printing facilities

As borne out by the survey, only two newspapers have direct access to fully fledged offset printing facilities (Bumayati in Kenya and Elimu Haina Mwisho in Tanzania). Aside from the several mimeographed newspapers, all others have to depend on subcontracts or agreements in order to assure printing facilities. The key problem is that with the present low circulation figures and monthly publication, no rural newspaper can afford the capital expenditure and operational costs to acquire and maintain its own presses. This is further complicated by the advancement of modern technology to develop heavy-gauge machinery and automated electronic printing techniques geared more towards a full-time printing industry than to a monthly rural press of modest circulation. Under these conditions it is doubtful if any rural newspaper, as defined in this survey, will ever own its own presses.

One possibility suggests itself, that of a modular offset printing facility servicing several satellite rural newspapers, each with their own editorial, photo-journalism, and layout facilities within the region in much the same way that Zambia's regional newspapers are organized. Assuming twenty-five to thirty newspapers within such a region, a single heavy-duty offset machine could easily handle the required maximum of 10,000 to 20,000 runs per day. This would keep the machine busy, thus recovering the capital investment and imposing less of a financial burden on each of the participating newspapers. Again, it would require thorough research to work out the cost feasibility and amortization. A heavier gauge machine would also provide the possibilities for expansion and development as newspapers increase circulation and grow to a higher level of sophistication.

Management

Inherent in most of the newspapers in this survey is the dependence on a government agency or ministry and the bureaucratic delays that this entails. For the rural newspapers, government sponsorship is often a mixed blessing; without government sponsorship, there might not have been any newspapers at all.

But as these newspapers develop from literacy vehicles to development information sources, they must also grow from subsidized, government-dependent newspapers into financially autonomous, professionally operated ones. While for the present, government subsidies will provide salaries, paper, materials and the like, there will come a time when management skills will have to be developed for scheduling, assigning tasks, procuring material and equipment, maintenance and total operations. Even with government assistance, many of these problems still recur. In the future, there will be a greater need of management training oriented towards the needs of small- to medium-sized newspapers - again a discipline which institutes and schools might wish to consider within their curricula.

APPROACHES TO A MORE VIABLE PRESS

The problems discussed in this survey point to three main approaches to developing a more viable rural press in Africa, or in any other part of the world. These three approaches are: training, research and regional or, as the case may be, sub-regional co-operation.

Training

It is simple enough to say that training is the solution to such problems as low level of skills, inadequate technical ability, or poor management. It is more difficult to outline the precise skills required or to develop them into suitable diploma or degree courses. Basically, a study programme on rural journalism should include:

(a) Basic Reporting and Editing Skills: News evaluation, reporting, sub-editing, editing, layout, photo-journalism, developing correspondents and stringers.

(b) Printing Techniques: As applied to low-cost, small-run, tabloid-sized offset machines,

implications for layout design, operations, maintenance.

(c) Economics of Rural Newspapers: Marketing strategies, diversification of revenue sources, accounting methods, budgeting, cost decision-making and using economic feasibility studies, the economic and sociological problems of introducing a newspaper in a non-newspaper region.

(d) Management of Rural Newspapers: Organization and planning, supervisory skills, scheduling, participatory decision-making.

(e) Development Communication: Concepts of development at macro and especially micro levels, selecting indices of development, using communication for development, right and wrong concepts of development communication, case studies, planning strategies, applications to rural newspapers, evaluating development in a rural context.

There are different levels at which any or a combination of these courses would be needed. The most immediate would be a series of short seminar/workshops, preferably for rural journalists working within a homogeneous region. These seminar/workshops could be sponsored by a number of participating institutions offering either a multi-institutional certificate or credits towards one of their regular degree courses.

A second level would be non-academic diploma courses usually offered by institutes or newspaper training departments. Some or a combination of the rural journalism courses might be integrated within existing courses or form a specialization apart.

The third level would be degree courses offered at the university level. While this is not an urgent need at the present time, when rural newspapers develop into more sophisticated forms or group together as some kind of federation of newspapers, there may be need of a more highly skilled leadership.

Research

There are three basic needs in the realm of research. The first is basic data collection. At present, there is no systematic source of information on rural newspapers. One of the initial steps should be to compile and reproduce basic descriptive data and baseline studies.

The second is evaluative research on the operations, relevance, contribution of rural newspapers to actual development, literacy and development levels. This kind of information would be extremely useful to rural journalists who need to have access to other methods, approaches, and strategies used by other rural newspapers.

The third should concentrate on exploratory studies on the economic feasibility of newspapers. This includes: investigation of new sources of revenue, determining the economic assets and capabilities of a region, cost phasing of newspaper operation, alternate systems of printing and their financial implications.

Aside from providing vital information to planners and decision-makers, the above studies can also provide the basic data and reference information for eventual courses on rural journalism.

Regional and subregional co-operation

Despite the vast expanse of the African continent, there are training and research facilities, if not in each country, at least in nearby countries with similar languages, cultural backgrounds and media problems. On the other hand, due to distances, expenses, and often sheer lack of contact, there has been little interchange either among training/research institutions themselves or between them and the media organizations, notably rural newspapers. Regional organizations such as the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE) and the African Federation of Rural Journalists (ARJORA) could profitably co-operate on projects leading to the design of a curriculum for rural journalism, seeking funds to assist the training of rural journalists, invoking the regional mandate of ACCE to serve as a possible accrediting source for certificates and diplomas conferred in rural journalism. This may eventually lead to a course or set of courses mutually accredited by a number of institutes. These could start as independent courses at first, and be integrated later on into regular courses or eventually form their own specialized discipline.

It is significant to note that the second biennial conference of the African Council on Communication Education (ACCE), held on 18-20 December 1978 in Dakar, included rural journalism as a key item of the agenda. The meeting recognized that the classical training given in communication schools prepared students mainly for urban journalism. But since the majority of Africans live in the rural areas, it was urgently necessary to consider the communication needs of the rural population.

Several suggestions were put forward by the directors of training institutions present at the conference:

1. Training institutions should create an awareness among their students of the potential of rural newspapers with a view to encouraging them eventually to work for such newspapers.
2. School curricula should include not only conceptual and academic preparation of journalists but also courses dealing with the creation, management, and production of rural newspapers.
3. As part of the school's extension activities, special programmes should be designed to train new reporters, photo-journalists, layout editors, and other journalistic and editorial personnel required for rural newspapers.
4. The schools should not only include simple survey research techniques in the training of rural journalists, but also undertake research into various aspects of rural newspapers: production, content, circulation, financial stability, attainment of development objectives.

5. The ACCE should seek funds to enable editorial staff to rural newspapers to visit and study newspapers in other countries and attend professional journalism courses at the schools.

6. The ACCE should try to canvass the idea of rural newspapers among governmental agencies with a view to securing support and financial assistance for such newspapers.

7. The ACCE newsletter A FRICOM should devote a regular column to the rural press and maintain contact with rural editors for potential material for the newsletter.

CONCLUSION

Considering the obstacles to an economically viable rural press in Africa - literacy levels, terrain, infrastructure, economic difficulties, access to training facilities and research resources - it is a credit to the rural journalist that any newspaper was established at all. That a number of them are still published today is a significant achievement. But looking to the long term, the future expansion of the rural press cannot be left to chance.

One of the major tasks in the next five years will be to begin making the links among rural journalists themselves, between rural newspapers and institutions for training and research. Without doubt, there will be problems in reorienting courses from metropolitan-based journalism to the "village press", in structuring some kind of career development for journalists within the domain of rural newspapers, in striving against the odds of poverty and economic paucity to put rural newspapers on a firm, financially autonomous footing.

Today, there exist training and research institutions and a number of rural journalists throughout Africa, ready to share their experiences. This is already a beginning.

ANNEX

RURAL NEWSPAPERS AND AFRICAN LANGUAGES

The choice of a language for a rural newspaper is a task complicated by the following considerations:

1. choosing a language that is universally understood by the intended readership;
2. choosing a language that is also the vehicle of literacy efforts in that area;
3. choosing a language that can be set in available types;
4. preparing a practical alphabet that can be widely understood for languages which are as yet unwritten.

Though there are more than 800 African languages, only fifty are spoken by more than half-a-million people. The others possess little scope for intercommunication. While English is in use in 18 countries and French in 21, these languages are usually confined to currency among the educated urban-élite and are thus rarely suitable for a rural newspaper.

Therefore, practically all rural newspapers prefer to use the languages which are current in the areas they are serving. Choice of language depends upon each country's individual cultural policies. It is interesting to note, however, that the languages used by the newspapers concerned in this study are understood in several countries. This is an increasingly favourable factor in the promotion of African languages in the formulation of regional communication systems for groups of countries belonging to the same linguistic area.

Rural press will therefore play an important role in solving the problems raised by the harmonization of texts in the African language as is illustrated in the following text:

Experts' Meeting on the Transcription and Harmonization of African Languages (Niamey, July 1978)

Extract from conclusions and recommendations:

Co-ordination and co-operation

In order to assure co-ordination of efforts extended by the countries and international organizations in favour of African languages, it is important to define clearly the different contexts in which bilateral and international co-operation can be exercised in the most effective manner. We suggest below two methods for dealing with the work involved in transcription and harmonization of languages and groups of languages, according to geographic and linguistic areas.

A. Inter-African languages

(a) Advantages of these languages

They encourage the development of inter-African relations and thereby contribute to the strengthening of African unity. They serve as pilot languages for all the other languages of the same linguistic group or of the same geographical zone as long as the solutions adopted for these languages are valid for the other less widely spread languages.

Finally, they can easily benefit from the support of international organizations within the framework of the regional projects.

(b) Possible criteria for definition of inter-African languages

They must:
be common to several countries;
be widely spoken;
possess a privileged status in certain countries.

(c) Provisional list of inter-African languages

West Africa

Fulfulde: (Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Benin)
Hawsa: (Niger, Nigeria, Sudan)
Kanuri: (Nigeria, Niger, Chad, Cameroon)
Mandingue: (Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Upper Volta)

Songhai-Zarma: (Mali, Niger, Benin)
Tamasheq: (Mali, Niger, Algeria, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco)
Yoruba: (Nigeria, Benin, Togo)
Wolof: (Senegal, Gambia)

Central and East Africa

Ewondo-fang: (Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon)
Kikongo: (Zaire, Angola, Congo, Gabon)
Kinyarwanda and Kirundi: (Rwanda, Burundi)
Kiswahili: (Tanzania, Kenya, Zaire, Uganda, Mozambique, Malawi, Comoros, Somalia)
Lingala: (Zaire, Congo)
Oromo: (Ethiopia, Kenya, etc.)
Sango: (Central African Empire, Chad, Congo, Zaire, etc.)
Somalia: (Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti)

Austral Africa

Tswana-Sotho: (Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa)
Nguni-Xhosa-Zulu-Swati-Ndebele: (South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe)
Shona: (Zimbabwe, Mozambique)

B. Groups and subgroups of languages

1. Definition. They are the languages belonging to a common linguistic and cultural area and are generally unrelated to the inter-African languages mentioned above. It is therefore advisable to solve the problems they have in common (linguistic research, oral traditions, promotion) within the context of the provisional linguistic classifications which have been established.

2. Provisional list

(i) West Atlantic languages (Senegal, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone)
(ii) "Krou" languages (Liberia, Ivory Coast)
(iii) Voltaic languages (Mali, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin, Niger)
(iv) "Sénoufo" languages (Ivory Coast, Mali, Upper Volta)
(v) "Kwa" languages (Ivory Coast, Ghana, Togo, Benin)
(vi) "Bantu" languages (Cameroon, Angola, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, Kenya, Benin)

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